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ABSTRACT

In terms of their unique views of education, and adult education in particular, the question is what East and West can learn from each other. It can be answered by qualifying and clarifying three assumptions: (1) there are certain modernist and postmodernist perspectives that differ from each other and have different impacts upon education; (2) the two worlds exist distinctly, operate separately, and embrace differing views of education; and (3) the two worlds can enter into some kind of transaction to give and take some of their educational views to each other's benefit. Regarding the first assumption, the postmodernist writers Lyotard and Foucault have criticized the totalizing logic of modernism; they suggest multifaceted, plural discourse as an alternative. Regarding the second assumption, East and West can be qualified in terms of the latter's modernist expansion. East in this analysis is a relative concept, the content of which changes as the East-West relationship develops. As to the third assumption, attention is drawn to the phenomenon of globalization, in which the problems of the West become increasingly infused into the discursive veins of the East. The West's modernizing experience can provide valuable lessons for Eastern adult educators in coping with their newly arising problems, whereas Western adult educators can find in the Eastern phenomena important hints for charting their ways to a stable postmodern condition. (Contains 17 references.)
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West in East and vice versa, or globalization in adult education

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1.

The theme of this conference is modernist and postmodernist renderings in adult education. The question assigned to me is what can East and West learn from each other in terms of their views of education, adult education in particular.

I consider it to be profitable to map out the question itself, complicated as it is, prior to contemplating an answer. I should, first, note the underlying assumption that there are certain modernist and postmodernist positions, which differ from each other and bear differently upon education. There is another assumption, this time, about two worlds, East and West, that they exist distinctly, operate separately, and embrace differing views of education. Finally, there is the third assumption that the two worlds, or the inhabitants of the two worlds, can enter into some kind of transaction, some constitutive interplay, to exchange some of their educational views to each others benefit. I should, however, point out that none of these assumptions is indisputable. While some may take it for granted that the postmodernist position differs from the modernist one, others may still doubt why and how it does so. East and West are not unequivocal terms, either. The meaning of West may well be stable with Europe or the world of Caucasians at its heart. East is not so, however. What, then, shall I mean by these terms, what educational views shall I associate with them, and how shall I determine the accounts rendered them by modernist and postmodernist discourses? The question of what East and West can learn from each other in terms of their educational views can be considered only when these doubts are cleared up.

2.

When I brought up doubts about why and how the two positions are different I did not mean that it is inappropriate to talk about something or anything that is new to what we normally characterise as modern or modernist. The point I bore in mind was simply that while the world which invented what is called modernism has obviously undergone significant changes, new postmodernist talks do not seem to supply a common view as to such changes. There are many such talks, running through varied veins while commonly taking place, as Lyotard points out, in relation to modernism (Reijen and Veerman 1988: 276). Setting distinction between the two

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positions is not a simple job, nor is it my concern here. For my discussion, I only intend to single out a useful theme for which some writers seem to pose to be postmodernist.

This theme is about a trend typically represented in what Habermas (1981: 8) calls the project of modernity--an incomplete project, though, as he assesses it. This project was initiated by the Enlightenment thinkers in the 18th century. And its essence consisted in the efforts to develop objective science, universal morality and law, and autonomous art according to their inner logic. It was intended to release the cognitive potentials of each of these domains to set them free from esoteric forms, and utilise what was thus acquired for enrichment of social life by its rational organisation--for emancipation from want, scarcity and natural calamity, as well as from religion, superstition and the arbitrary use of power. The underlying assumption of the project was, Harvey (1992: 27) notes, that there was only one possible answer to any question. From this, the Enlightenment modernists concluded that the world could be controlled and rationally ordered if we could only picture and represent it rightly. This conclusion was shared in diverse ways by the writers of the subsequent generations, who sought for such right pictures or representations and formulated universally valid knowledge, moral and legal principles and broad interpretative schemes (Ibid.: 45). They thus entailed a great deal of progress in life--the explosion of commodification, mechanisation, technology, exchange and the market (Kellner 1988: 240-2), let alone political and other reforms and revolutions.

Postmodernist writers seem to be troubled by modernisms totalising tendency of dealing with diverse matters in reference to such universally valid knowledge, principles, and so on. In Foucaults (1980) analysis, for instance, there is always gap between thinkable structures and unthinkable events. These events may well occur in connection with each other, or one engendering another. Among themselves, however, they form various networks and levels to complicate and variegate their mutual relationships. So much so that attempts to grasp them in universally applicable simple models of language are likely to end up unsuccessfully. When a set of propositions, such as scientific knowledge, claims objectivity and universal validity, therefore, it is likely to do so due to its conformity to a certain regime governing discourses, rather than due to its correspondence to the universal truth if there is any truth. Formulation of propositional knowledge--scientific knowledge par excellence--is not really a matter of representing such truthin language. It can be, rather, a matter of what governs statements and the way in which the governing entities govern each other so as to constitute a set of propositions which are scientifically acceptable, and hence capable of being verified or falsified by scientific procedures. The essence of modern propositional knowledge, then, may not be the objective and universally valid truth it claims to contain but the politics of scientific statement (Ibid.: 112), or the power that controls scientific statement.

Lyotard (1984), as well, makes another sceptical observation of modern scientific knowledges universal validity. In his observation, science is basically a language game. And the rules of this game shift from one set to another. What is called modern science, therefore, is not viable invariably. It is merely a game played according to a specific set of rules. Modern science as such a game is what legitimates itself with reference to its own rules, or by virtue of a certain metadiscourse, another discourse hiding behind a discourse, which is, as Foucault characterises it, opaque unlike uttered transparent discourses.

Given such sceptical views, the important point to note in the modernist approach is the power vested in the universal validity of modern knowledge which comes into play when such knowledge is applied to organising life on various sites of material production, politics, education,and so on. On the positive side, as the modernists desired, the power may well emancipate individuals from traditional oppressive ties and ensure for them material ease, as Foucault (1980: 119) points out, by setting up a productive network which runs through the whole social body. On the negative side, however, it subjugates the individuals to the meticulous, relentless and ruthless control of totalising modernist discourses. This is, no doubt, another oppressive condition--the condition of T S Eliots hollow man, perhaps.

An important issue on the postmodernist agenda and possibly significant element in the postmodern condition, then, should be emancipation from the domination of the totalising modernist culture--knowledge, principles, broad interpretative schemes. Foucaults advice for this is to break open the closed circuit of modernist discourses and to intervene in the processes of knowledge production in order thus to restore in scientific and other discourses the human qualities of openness. At each localised site of oppression--the prison, the asylum, the school, the hospital--he expects numerous and multifaceted discourses to upsurge challenging the dominant power/knowledge and cancel out much of its harmful effects. Similarly, Lyotard as well emphasises the flexibility of utterances and argue for the emergence of numerous, mutually differentiated language games to give rise to institutions in patches or a state of local determinism.

A postmodern condition, in these views, will differ from the modern condition in its flexibility and multiplicity of discourses, plurality of solutions, decentralised and heterogeneouslocals of autonomy, plurality of rationalities--in short, its becoming a world of deconstruction.

3.

Having said this much about modernism and postmodernism, let me turn to the second assumption. Do East and West exist as two distinct worlds, separately operating and embracing differing views of education? It is important to note that the worlds at issue, namely, Europe on one side and East Asia --China, Korea and Japan--on the other as often contrasted in this neighbourhood of the globe, have not been viewing each other in the same light. As I A Richards (1932: xiv) once pointed out, the modern West has been taking itself to be the world. The rest, for it, consisted of lands of insignificance resided by heathens, or barbarians and savages, remote from modern civilisation. As to the distinction between the West as the centre and its non-Western peripheries, Said (1993: 108-10) observes, the geographical and cultural boundaries were considered absolute. Beyond the boundaries, Europeans were amazingly indifferent. Then, modernism on its scientific flank, facilitated by the development of ethnography, began to turn such indifference to codification of differences and the weaving of such differences into various evolutionary schemes going from primitive to subject races, and finally to superior or civilized peoples. This totalising movement led to what Said calls imperial domination by the modern Europe of the premodern peripheries not only by means of direct domination and physical force but, more importantly, by persuasive means of exporting universally valid knowledge, principles, and so on. The effect of the latter were, in Said's own words, the quotidian processes of

hegemony--very often creative, inventive, interesting, and above all executive--[which] yield surprisingly well to analysis and elucidation. Consequently, the peripheries underwent the cultural and ecological transformations called modernisation. To the modernist Europeans, East Asia was no exception. It too was nondescript, indistinct, insignificant--far from the stage of modern civilisation. John Buchan expressed this view typically when he called China an incoherent power and unorganized intelligence . . . millions of quick brains stifled in trumpery crafts . . . [with] no direction, no driving power (cited in Said 1979: 251).

East Asians, on the other hand, have never viewed Europe as their periphery since the second half of the 19th century when they first encountered the internationalising Europeancapitalism which was soon to be dubbed imperialism. The Eastern word soyang (pronounced so in Korean but xiyang in Chinese and seiyo in Japanese, and meaning the West Ocean) was invented around this time most likely by Japans rangaku scholars. Their invention of this word, and its counterpart, dongyang (pronounced so in Korean and similarly in Chinese but toyo in Japanese, and meaning the East Ocean), seems to reflect their concerns about coping with the influential West. To note here is that East and West are grasped as two opposite oceans rather than two extremes of the continent which actually adjoined the two worlds. The West Ocean is reachable by ship, not on land. It is, therefore, not meant to be the premodern Europe with which East Asians have had occasional contact, in effect, exercising significant influences, but the modern Europe from which hakurai (meaning literally ship-brought and practically modern, of superior quality) knowledge, principles, goods, and so on, originated. Note now that the East Ocean is juxtaposed alongside the West Ocean to imply that both share, or ought to share, an equal status. The coining of the two new words clearly exhibits Easterners development of an identity and a self-assertive position in relation to Westerners. This self-identifying andself-assertive response presupposes an uneasiness, a fear, in dealing with the modern West.1 This fear is well documented by Yukichi Fukuzawa (1969: 21), himself an eminent rangaku scholar who coined in Chinese characters many new words in order to accommodate European terminology. In the early 1870s, he agreed with many of his contemporaries that the question of Japans independence in the modern world was unavoidable.

In response to the West, Easterners seem to follow two contradictory yet incredibly coexistent threads of talk. In one such thread, they succumb to what Said calls the persuasive means of cultural imperialism by actively accommodating the rational and wonderfully efficientmode of modernist discourses. We may name this thread emulative in the sense it helps narrow the gap between the two polarised worlds by copying as closely as possible the Wests discursive mode. Fukuzawa (Ibid.: 22) followed mainly this thread. Judging from Japans present situation, he writes, we have not yet reached the level of the West in the areas of scholarship, business, and law. But, he goes on to point out, modern civilization is chiefly built upon the foundation of these three areas of endeavour. Without sufficient progress in these three areas, anations independence can clearly not be maintained. Notably, Japans withstanding Western encroachment is here argued for in reference to the goals to get at, which apparently indicate modern science in scholarship, capitalism in the economy, and government by law. That government by law here is considered in a rational, liberal democratic vein is clear in Fukuzawas subsequent argument for national independence through personal independence, and criticism of the despotic rule which since time immemorial did not permit freedom of expression.

In another thread, they adhere to what is deemed Eastern in opposition to what is Western. A glaring example of this oppositional thread is seen in the donghak thought. Choi Je Wu advanced this thought in the early 1860s by putting together what he deemed to be the essentials of Eastern teachings--Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism--with which to resist Western influences (sohak). Armed with such essentially Eastern teachings indeed his followers later on stood up to launch what historians now regard as the beginning of Koreas anti-imperialist movement. The oppositional thread--which unfortunately does not attract sufficient light in Saids study of cultural imperialism in the Oriental context--cuts across East Asians discourses. I do not mean just those eccentrics who wish to believe, or make believe, what is Eastern is superior to what is Western, such as the militarist aesthetes who insisted on the supremacy of the Japanese beauty and the young Red Guards who proclaimed the East Winds imminent subduing of the West Wind. What is equally significant is the employment of the modernist mode of discourse for the purpose of buttressing self-esteem and self-assertion. Consider the claim advanced by archaeologists in the country of scientific socialism to the retrieval of King Tanguns (and his wifes) 5,000-year-old skeletons in a near perfect shape. In South Korea as well, historians of Ancient Korea have been stretching the evidential power of the archaeological dugouts in their hands until they secured an immense territory for their remote ancestors. In these exemplar cases, the modernist language of science is used to codify remains of the past, valorise them as evidence, and construct out of them a tradition or an identity, intensive or extensive, of which the East Asians can be proud.

By the East, we should refer to the identity, the culture, which East Asians formulate and reformulate along such threads of talk in eking out a viable relationship with the West.2 To mean by this term the culture of the past, that is, the thoughts, ideas, customs and traditions of the previous inhabitants of this world, is to refer it to what it has not much to do with. Such thoughts, ideas, and so on, were created by those who did not know about the West and, therefore, did not operate in relation to the latter. The educational views of the two worlds should also be considered in the same light. Where the East defines itself in relation to the West and has already undergone a great deal of West-triggered modernising processes, it is simply inappropriate to grasp its educational view merely in terms of the past inhabitants ideas about education. None of such ideas can remain intact in the modernising processes. The East has repeatedly processed anew native educational ideas and practices in emulative and oppositional responses to what is on the West's modernist educational agenda, such as public education, freedom of learning, equal opportunity, efficiency, and rights. The conclusions it has been drawing from such prismatic (Riggs 1964) processings may well exhibit overall Western features, yet the latter are never the same as those ideas of the West. They may also contain lingering traditional elements. The latter, however, are quite different from what existed before the Wests cultural invasion.

4.

What, then, does postmodernism have to do with the East-West relationship? I should be committing the same modernist sin of totalising if I attempt to unreservedly apply to the East postmodernist themes. Such an attempt will not generate any such ideas as to deserve the brand of postmodernism, for here again we will see unidirectional cultural flows (see, for instance, Stauffer 1979) from the modern centre to the premodern periphery with the force of universal validity. In order to determine postmodernist renderings to the East-West relationship, distinct from the

modernist one, we need some new approach, new postulation, in which the West is a taker not just the giver and the East a giver while remaining the taker, each on its own account. Such a give-and-take relationship is in fact what the third assumption is about, in terms of adult education. How do we obtain such a postulation, however?

Paradoxically, I think we can obtain this postulation in the modernist context itself. Consider this. There is a reservoir with two compartments in it, each containing a unique liquid substance. Pump the liquid substance of a compartment into the other compartment. Initially, the compartment on the giving end will maintain the purity of its content while the receiving compartment will change its content to something which it did not have originally. As the second compartment gets filled up, however, the mixed liquid in it will overflow back into the giving compartment and disrupt the makeup of the latters content. Eventually, the contents of the two compartments will become increasingly homogeneous although you are, all the while, pumping the first compartments liquid into the second compartment. Were the liquid substances cultures, it would be possible to draw from this imaginary experiment two interesting conclusions: first, that unidirectional cultural flow invites reverse flow and, second, that, as the reverse flow occurs, reciprocity of relationship sets in between the giving and receiving cultures to initiate what might be called cultural globalisation.3

Honestly, I am not sure how neatly these conclusions will lay down postmodernist renderings on the East-West relationship. Cultural globalisation obtained above does not logically imply discontinuity from modernism. The centres dominant culture will continue to flow to the periphery with the force of universal validity. And the culture flowing back from the periphery will contain many modernist elements originating from the centre. Therefore, cultural globalisation in light of our imaginary experiment can be seen as modernisation on the global dimension or as cultural imperialisms global hegemony, rather than realisation of a post-modern condition.

In spite of such doubts, however, I find a few positive reasons for employing the conclusions from our imaginary experiment for exploring a possible mode of East-West cultural transaction which somewhat differs from the modernist mode. First, although the centre will continue to unidirectionally transfer its universally valid cultural content to the peripheries, its totalising force will diminish when the latters changing cultures start reverse flow. As in the Easts case, these cultures contain elements serving oppositional purposes. When they get mixed with the centres dominant culture, the discursive environment of the centre will be impaired. The totalising force laden on the centres original culture in the name of universal validity will thus be challenged. The more peripheral cultures flow back from various directions, the more seriously will the centres culture lose its totalising force. Meanwhile, both in the centre and in the peripheries, numerous non-dominant cultures will become increasingly visible. Such a state will be quite similar to what is suggested by postmodernist writers, namely, a state of flexibility and multiplicity of discourses, plurality of solutions, and so on.

Discourses on the recent development of capitalism, especially on the phenomenon of multinational business operation, seem to offer additional reasons. The crucial point in that phenomenon is what Harvey (1992: 141-72) calls flexible accumulation, for which capital abandons the large-scale Fordist plant in the industrial centre. Instead, it breaks itself into small,

flexible and mobile entities, which in turn flow to wherever the environment is favourable. The results are internationalisation of production (Hoogvelt 1987) and decentralisation of the world economy. Mandel (1968, 1975, 1995)
takes such changes to be features of late capItalism, in which both capitalism and contradictions of capitalism spread world-wide, thus preparing the world revolution Trotzky predicted. As to their impact upon the West, Offe (1985) draws attention to disorganised capitalism and the workers deprived of their jobs. In the East, on the other hand, numerous writers have noted Japans emergence from the periphery as a new industrial centre and also the fact that Japans capital is flowing out to its own peripheries (for an interesting account, see Oe 1982), thus destabilising its bubble economy. Similar phenomena are now observed also in South Korea and other Little Dragons. Although each of these discourses are advanced in its unique context--and regardless of what I would like to say here--they as a whole suggest that the borderlines between the centre and the peripheries, and between East and West, become thinner.

Will the changing configuration of the world economy have a cultural impact? Friedman (1988: 453) observes that the changes in the world economy provides the [postmodern] material logic within which the worlds cultural logics find their variable expressions. He goes on to write, While modernism declines in the West giving rise to a myriad expression of ethnicities, religious cults, and various traditionalisms, there is an apparent rise of an Eastern variant of modernism in Southeast Asia, one of its forms being neo-Confucianism. If he is right, may we not say that the West will become increasingly susceptible to the cultural overflows from the East, and that the latter will undergo intensified modernising processes? May we not also say that through such processes, the East will continue its emulative and oppositional discourses and split its population into sectors, some of which gradually effacing the borderline between East and West while some others try to keep it distinct by hanging on to elements of the traditional culture but, nevertheless, continuously diluting them with modern elements?

If you agree, for these reasons, to conveniently label the economic and cultural configurations thus obtained postmodernist, I think I can conclude this section by stating that postmodernist renderings are, for the East, modernisation and resistance on various cultural fronts, and, for the West, the collapse of the modernist hegemony and susceptibility to the Easts peripheral cultures. What East and West can give and take, then, is apparent, for what else can they do than accept such changes? I am, nevertheless, not sure whether I can take the consequences to be to each others benefit, for globalisation in itself is neither good nor bad.

5.
Viewed in this light, then, what can East and West learn from each other in relation to their views of education, adult education in particular? Education has one purpose, be it for mature persons or children. This purpose is to benefit living, individual or

collective. And for living, the most important concern is the changes that occur to the environment of daily operation. The very fact that modernist and postmodernist discourses analyse, interpret and regulate the environment of living--discursive or material--implies the tremendous effect which such discourses apply to our life. Therefore, if education, adult education in particular, is to serve its purpose, educators cannot ignore such changes. If the changes are like what I clarified above, I may say what follows.

For the East, since the modernising processes will continue with even a greater intensity it will be necessary that students--adults or non-adults--be prepared to cope with new changes. In going through such changes, the most important problem Easterners will have to deal with will be what Friedman (Ibid.: 452) takes to be a critical prerequisite for the establishment of the modernist identity and, in fact, what was the most serious concern of such critics of modernisation as Marx, namely, the individualisation of society. The premodern structures of social life will further disintegrate. Pathetic symptoms of the individualised society are already erupting, notably, the alienated, reified atoms who seek personal interest at each others expense and the gullible political animals whose immediate interest hampers democratic political processes. In order to accommodate changes to a healthy modern, and pretty soon post-modern, identity, it will be necessary to educate the new-born individuals to self-governing, responsible members of society who understand that their freedom is granted so long as they do not harm others and that happiness requires more than immediate gains. This was J S Mills principal concern when he grappled with the modernist spirit of [his] age. For Eastern adult educators, Mills concern will be valid, more significantly than making any totalising effort to turn learners to instruments for competition on the globalising market. For this, they can learn lessons from Westerners experiences, as well as from Easterners own oppositional responses to Western influences.

For the West, the Easts experiences may throw useful insights for solving its own problems. The depleting authority of the totalising modernist logic is obvious in the West. In fact, many Westerners have borrowed elements of Eastern cultures and incorporated them into their oppositional voices to the modernist logic. Remember the trendy practices in the rebellious 60s of Zen Buddhism, Yoga and even Daoist sexual techniques. Recently, gurus of Eastern medicinal practices, such as herbal treatment, acupuncture, shiatsu, and so on, are drawing audience from those seeking alternative medicine. Such Eastern marshall arts as taekwondo, karate, judo and kungfu are now becoming established sports on their own rights, codified and regulated. In all these and other spheres, Western adults have learned and can continue to learn from the East in grappling with their modern and postmodern problems.

There is a more important point to note. That is, the modernising processes which the East now undergoes are not the same as what the West has gone through. The Easts oppositional threads of discourse helped preserve more or less successfully elements of its traditional culture in spite of the modernist invasion. To some extent,

the phenomenon of globalisation is bringing postmodern cultural elements into the Easterners daily discourses. Accordingly, the path in which the East modernises itself is an untrodden one. So, should there not be lessons for the West to learn from the East? Western adult educators may discover a serious but interesting job in this respect.

Notes

1. The Easterners seem to have widely shared this fear. When the meiji elite--the young samurai from West Japan who accidentally toppled the senile Shogunate--sought to annex Korea they gave the reason of securing peace and security for the East. An Jung Gun, the widely revered Korean patriot, as well justified his 1909 assassination of Hirobumi Ito, the powerful figure in the Japanese elite who had taken control of the Korean government, by the same reason rather than by referring to Itos violation of his nations sovereignty. For the samurai-turned politician, Japans leadership would safeguard peace and security from the dreadful West. For An, Japans expansionist drive would only hurt the peace and security, for it disrupted the Easts internal order in the face of the West.

2. This position enables to explain many interesting Eastern phenomena, for instance, the dictatorial powers which have prevailed Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in the name of liberal democracy; the juche thought which begins with a Marxian man-centred philosophy but ends up justifying mens subordination to a certain infallible Chief; the Japanese model of market economics (Sakakibara 1993) characteristic in its mixing of state control with market competition and present in most Eastern nations; and the relationships of loyalty and protection in firms, political parties, the military, schools, and numerous other institutions. All these phenomena reflect the actual sites of Eastern life on which a modern culture is formed and transformed along the two discursive threads coexistent in parallel, in intertwinement, and in entanglement.

3. Actually, scholars have documented this phenomenon in diverse contexts of various times with its typical features of a cultures expansion towards its peripheries, subsequent cultural transformations in the peripheries, and counter-influence by the transformed peripheral cultures. For instance, Wallerstein (1974), obviously in the Annales tradition of seeking synthe∈e, identifies what he calls modern world system in the late 15th and early 16th century with the Europe of mercantile capitalism at its centre and the rest of the globe at the peripheries. Frank (1992, 1993), on the other hand, takes note of the centrality of Central Asia and argues that the history of globalisation dates as much as five thousand years back. As if to endorse this argument, Algaze (1993) meticulously analyses and compares the remains of the clay tablet civilisation of the alluvial Mesopotamia to make a case that there was an Uruk world system five thousand years ago, although the location is a little bit removed from Central Asia. These studies demonstrate that globalisation can occur wherever a powerful culture expands its influence regardless of the times being modern, pre- or post-modern.

Abstract

The theme of this conference is modernist and postmodernist renderings in adult and continuing education. And the question I am invited to address is, in light of their unique views of education, adult and continuing education in particular, what can East and West learn from each other.

I address this question by qualifying and clarifying three implicated assumptions: that there are certain modernist and postmodernist perspectives, which differ from each other and bear differently upon education; that the two worlds, East and West, exist distinctly, operate separately, and embrace differing views of education; and that the two worlds, or the inhabitants of the two worlds, can enter into some kind of transaction, some constitutive interplay, to give and take some of their educational views to each others benefit.

As to the first assumption, I take note of the totalising logic of modernism which such postmodernist writers as Lyotard and Foucault bring up. These writers suggest multifaceted, plural discourse as a postmodern alternative. Regarding the second assumption, I qualify East and West in terms of the latters modernist expansion, to which the former, as I argue, has been responding in two threads: emulative and oppositional. East in this analysis is a relative concept, the content of which changes as the East-West relationship develops. As to the third assumption, I draw attention to the phenomenon of globalisation, in which the problems of the West become increasingly infused into the discursive veins of the East. My conclusion is that the Wests modernising experience can provide valuable lessons for Eastern adult educators in coping with their newly arising problems while, at the same time, Western adult educators can find in the Eastern phenomena important hints for charting their ways to a stable postmodern condition.

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